

South Shore Estuary Reserve Council Meeting

May 14, 2019, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
West Sayville Golf Course, Meadowedge Building
200 Montauk Highway, West Sayville, NY

Draft Minutes

Attending:

NYS Department of State, Office of Planning, Development and Community Infrastructure
Kisha Santiago-Martinez, Deputy Secretary of State, representing NY Secretary of State Rossana Rosado

South Shore Estuary Reserve Office:

Jeremy Campbell
Sherry Forgash
Sally Kellogg
Rachel Neville
Christie Pfoertner

Council Members:

Alison Branco, representing The Nature Conservancy
Jim Browne, representing Town of Hempstead Supervisor, Laura Gillen
Maureen Dolan Murphy, representing Reserve Council Citizens Advisory Committee
Michael Eagan, representing Captree Boatmen's Association
Joe Febrizio, representing City of Long Beach Acting Manager, Robert Agostisi
Lauretta Fischer, representing Suffolk County Executive, Steven Bellone
Anthony Graves, representing Town of Brookhaven Supervisor, Edward Romaine
Rich Groh, representing Town of Babylon Supervisor, Richard H. Schaffer
Robert Grover, representing Great South Bay Audubon
Robert Hayes, representing Town of Islip Supervisor, Angie Carpenter
Kevin Moran, representing the Long Island Builders Institute
Maureen Dolan Murphy, representing the Reserve Citizens Advisory Committee
Marty Shea, representing Town of Southampton Supervisor, Jay Schneiderman
Maryann Webb, representing Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor, Joseph S. Saladino
Tom Wilson, representing SUNY School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, Dean Paul Shepson

Council Advisors:

Brian Foley, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, representing Acting Commissioner Erik Kulleseid

Guests/Other Interested Parties:

Michael Bilecki, Fire Island National Seashore, NPS
Brian Bogle, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Adrienne Esposito, Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Kathleen Fallon, NY Sea Grant
Alexa Fournier, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Ryan Hodgetts, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Alexa Marinos, Town of Babylon
Tara Schneider-Moran, Town of Hempstead
Enrico Nardone, Seatuck Environmental Association
Breanna Perso, Town of Babylon
Kyle Rabin, LINAP / LI Regional Planning Council
Lou Siegel, NYS Marine Education Association

Nancy Solomon, Long Island Traditions
Angie Sowers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
John Tanacredi, Molloy College/CERCOM

Presenters:

Scott Sanderson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Brian Gyory, NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation
David Berg, L.I. Regional Planning Council / LINAP

Welcome and Introductions

J. Campbell called the Council meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. He welcomed and thanked all for attending. The speakers and their topics for today's meeting were introduced. New staff Sally Kellogg and Rachel Neville were also introduced to Council.

K. Santiago-Martinez thanked all for attending today's meeting and for their continued commitment to the SSER program. She thanked all stakeholders for keeping the work in progress during the time the SSER program was understaffed; and for everyone's input to the revised SSER Comprehensive Management Plan; this topic is on today's agenda. She also highlighted Rachel and Sally, the newly hired staff to the SSER program. She noted how local governments are implementing resiliency projects, and to make certain that resources are aimed at needed projects.

Approval of October 4, 2018 Council Meeting Minutes

Motion by Rich Groh to approve the October 4, 2019 Council Meeting Minutes; seconded by John Tanacredi; carried.

Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) Revision

J. Campbell noted that over \$500 million has already been spent on projects that implement the CMP. The revision process began in 2016 and included workgroups to discuss the revisions to be made by chapter topic in the 2001 CMP, the addition of a new Resiliency chapter (includes sea level rise, nitrogen, onsite wastewater treatment systems, and living shorelines) and attention to priority actions including the reduction of stormwater and nutrient pollution, restoration of wetlands, seagrass and shellfish habitat, increasing open space, and public education on the value of the South Shore Estuary. The revised CMP draft was reviewed by the workgroups and council members and is currently being reviewed by DOS.

The public meetings for comments on the revised CMP are currently being organized and will tentatively be scheduled this fall. The draft CMP, which has been reformatted for ease of reading, will be distributed to council members.

Some other outcomes which have been added are monitoring systems, shoreline management, marine debris, pesticides/herbicides, microplastics, PPCPs (pharmaceuticals and personal care products), N-loading from OWTS, SAV degradation, Horseshoe Crabs, invasive species, emerging contaminants, local waterfront development, fisheries, marine trades, and citizens science.

The CMP should be out for public review this summer.

M. Dolan Murphy asked if the comment period could be coordinated with the July CAC meeting, so it can be discussed. This could be arranged.

Citizens Advisory Committee Report

M. Dolan Murphy reviewed the past CAC meetings held:

At the January 2019 CAC meeting, a letter congratulating the newly elected officials was distributed to members and the legislative changes were discussed; Kyle Rabin gave a LINAP update; and there was a discussion on the Suffolk County sewer referendum, which the CAC supported.

At the March 2019 CAC meeting, plastics legislation was discussed; the CAC discussed the menhaden legislation and offshore drilling; the results of the Suffolk County Sewer vote were discussed; and a discussion on the new development in the Village of Patchogue.

At the May 2019 CAC meeting the U.S. Army Corps will give a presentation on the Nassau County back bays.

At the September 2019 CAC meeting, there will be a Blueway trail update by Hempstead, Babylon and possibly Suffolk County.

M. Dolan Murphy thanked everyone for making the 2018 Stewardship Award a success; and thanked Mike Eagan for providing his vessel, The Lauren Kristy, for the boat tour and award ceremony. The 2019 Stewardship Award subcommittee has been formed and met to discuss changes to be made; the process will start earlier; a new, simplified application form will be done, and S. Kellogg has completed a draft; the goal is to have the applications submitted by July 31. Mike Eagan has again offered his vessel for the 2019 boat tour. All Council members should announce the award through their own websites.

B. Grover asked if there was a definition for “microplastics” (the size is 5mm). A. Esposito noted that the CMP definition will be used. B. Grover asked if there is a cap on development density within sewer districts, and that not having sewers guides the development density. L. Fischer will find out answer. A. Esposito said that the sewer connection will be to existing homes and will be at no charge to homeowners. A. Branco noted that it would be the decision of the local zoning to guide the development density. There was more discussion about the sewerage; Bob Grover mentioned the construction of a 436-unit apartment complex in Sayville, and the developer would provide sewers for the apartments and Sayville’s business district. Rich Groh mentioned 3 areas in Babylon are being sewerage for single family homes using low pressure systems. Commercial properties are not included.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Report

J. Campbell gave the report in Lane Smith’s absence. Four TAC meetings were held since the October 2018 Council meeting. Discussions were held at the last TAC meeting on a solute transport model; climate change; prioritizing projects recommended in the Updated Coordinated Water Resources Monitoring Strategy; a Sea Level Rise presentation by Alison Branco; and input from Shawn Fisher, USGS. The TAC is finalizing a proposal for a climate change vulnerability assessment for the Reserve and hopes to have a draft by the next Council meeting. A. Esposito asked what a climate vulnerability assessment is; J. Campbell replied that it is an assessment on how climate relates to wetlands, the economy, and stormwater, etc. N. Solomon asked if there was a climate change vulnerability assessment for the effect on fishermen and baymen. R. Groh added that the effects are tied to acidification. M. Bilecki, NPS, noted that assessments have been done; the TAC will provide a letter of recommendation for a vulnerability study to the Council including a funding level.

South Shore Estuary Reserve Office Report

C. Pfoertner reported on Education/Outreach efforts. She wrote a full report for 2018, summarizing all events attended and work accomplished. She can distribute this report to Council. Nine events have been

done so far this year, including: seal walk; marine debris cleanup with Massapequa High School Environmental Club; Long Island Natural History Conference; Seatuck Eco-Carnival; Babylon Earth Day; Creek Defenders Day; LIISMA Invasive Species Conference. At the Long Island Natural History Conference, Save the Great South Bay took a video of SSER staff and put it on their Facebook page and it was well received. SSER also put together a resiliency forum in the Town of Babylon and is working on two new forums, one with the Jones Beach Power Squadron and one in Quogue Wildlife Refuge. SSER staff is participating in Horseshoe Crab monitoring with Cornell Cooperative Extension at two sites and will be reaching out for volunteers during the June dates. M. Shea asked how the Horseshoe Crab data will be used; it will be used for Horseshoe Crab management and to determine alternative baits. There are no restrictions on harvesting.

R. Neville reported on the Alewife monitoring with Seatuck. None have been observed yet, and this could be temperature/weather related; but they have observed glass eels. Outreach materials on native plants as alternatives to invasives and an activity booklet have been created and are available for distribution to partners.

S. Kellogg reported on A Day in the Life program; SSER will expand the sampling sites. She is also working on the SSER funded contracts for 2017.

N. Solomon asked if DOS will offer a small grants RFP; yes they will.

Break – reconvene at 2:35 p.m.

Nassau County Back Bays, Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study,
Scott Sanderson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

This study, released in April 2019, is available on the USACE website at:
<https://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Nassau-County-Back-Bays-Study/>

Public meetings to discuss the study will be held in Freeport and City of Long Beach on June 12 and June 26, 2019.

S. Sanderson summarized the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Nassau County was identified as one of the nine focus study areas. The original authority to choose a study area is from the Study Authority Chapter 140, Public Law 71, 84th Congress (15 June 1955), and can be found on page 2 of the feasibility study. He also explained how the USACE does a feasibility study, including the study purpose, non-federal sponsor and the study area (See Six Step Planning Process, section 2.2 on page 8 of the Study).

Hydrodynamic Modeling was done for the three inlets in the study area, Rockaway, Jones and Fire Island inlets. An economic analysis is an inventory of the structures and content in the study area and is assigned a value. B. Grover asked what a “storm damage reduction analysis” meant. It is a summary of analysis that will assign a value to assets (under the existing conditions with no project put in place) and compare that to the damage to an area if a project were to be done. It was asked if the USACE is considering specific projects, and they are; the Corps is considering surge barriers and cross-bay barriers. As mentioned above, the study area includes Rockaway, Jones and Fire Island inlets. Topography is considered, as well as elevation and overwash vulnerability. The study area is bigger than the project area.

It was asked if this study includes the FIMP (Fire Island to Montauk Point Study). The Corps wants to be more inclusive and is still determining the study area. The northern extent of the floodplain is based on the 500-year flood event. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be done in 2020. S. Sanderson suggested that everyone view the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website for the “Coastal Barriers

Resource Act at: www.fws.gov/CBRA. It is federally mandated that studies must be completed in 3 years, but this project is too big to meet that requirement and the program has asked for a waiver on this limit. If the waiver is approved, funding will also be made available and the project costs should be completely covered. Project partners include NYS DEC and Nassau County.

K. Santiago-Martinez noted that DOS is aware that federal agencies are unable to fund projects in certain areas. The information garnered by federal studies provides useful information.

Green Infrastructure Grant Program (GIGP), NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation, Brian Gyory, Green Infrastructure Coordinator

This is part of the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation, Green Innovation Grant Program which is described on the website at: <https://www.efc.ny.gov/GIGP>. The grants (90% funding with a 10% match) are part of the Regional Economic Development Council Consolidated Funding Application program and supports projects that utilize unique stormwater infrastructure design and create cutting-edge green technologies. Some of the projects include stormwater infrastructure, bioretention, restoration of natural hydrology, pervious pavement, green roofs, and others, which are described on the website. GIGP provides grants on a competitive basis to projects that improve water quality and implement green stormwater infrastructure. This year there is \$15 million available for funding.

NYS Fertilizer Reduction Legislation, David Berg, L.I. Regional Planning Council / LINAP

David Berg reported that workgroups were formed in 2016 and included state and local governments, golf course supervisors, environmental groups, and was focused on turf grass only. The workgroup proposed a decrease in the amount of fertilizer applied. There is no legislation for this, but a nutrient runoff law does exist. Restrictions on application exist for applications on frozen ground and standing water. Recommendations for application periods are: Suffolk County restriction dates are November 1 and April 1. Nassau County restriction dates are November 15 – April 1. These dates are based on soil temperature and the ability of turfgrass to utilize fertilizer.

Recommendations include: a restriction on the date of sale for fertilizer; a minimum of 50% content of slow-release nitrogen; and water-soluble nitrogen. Currently, there is a single application rate of 0.6 lb. N / 1,000 square feet; and, a yearly application rate of 1.8 lb. N / 1,000 square feet.

Cornell has calculated BMPs for fertilizer application on golf courses. Some include leaving grass clippings and calibrating fertilizer spreaders, not applying when raining, or between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Nassau County has a restriction on lawn watering between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The use of smart sensors is encouraged. It is also recommended to use alternative grass species that require less nitrogen.

Council Member Updates and Roundtable Discussion

Marty Shea, Town of Southampton reported that bulkheading has been installed in back bay areas of the Town. There was more Sandy-damage than natural measure could mitigate, so engineered structures were used. USACE is working with the Town to address losses and strengthen the barrier island. In February, a law was passed to restrict Styrofoam packaging and plastic straws.

Kathleen Fallon, NY Sea Grant reported there will be a resiliency forum on June 12.

Lauretta Fischer, Suffolk County reported they want to complete the Blueway trail plan for Suffolk County within one year. The County is doing a project with USDA-NRCS, federal funding, to buy properties in the Town of Brookhaven. They had their first closing for 1 of 25 parcels on wetland

restoration work. The County bought property at Swan River to protect the watershed, also on Patchogue River and Tuthills Creek.

Brian Foley, NYS Parks reported that improvements have been made at Jones, Captree and Robert Moses State Parks. Over \$65 million in improvements have been made at Jones Beach. The Annual Air Show will be held at Jones Beach and draws over 250,000 people. Septic improvements and a connection to the sewer district have been made at Heckscher State Park.

Lou Siegel, NYS Marine Education Association asked about the status of the Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center. Brian Foley said upgrades will be made to improve this environmental education center.

Joe Febrizio, City of Long Beach reported that the City will convert the Long Beach WWTP by 2024 and they and Nassau County are under consent order to do so. The Consent Order requires that the Long Beach WWTP be converted to a pump station that will transport Long Beach effluent via a proposed Reynolds Channel pipeline to the Bay Park WWTP (renamed the South Shore Water Reclamation Facility). Ultimately, waste treated at the Bay Park WWTP will be pumped to the Cedar Creek Water Quality Treatment Center/Ocean Outfall. The estimated cost for the pump station and pipe line is approximately \$70 million. The City was awarded approximately \$20 million under the FEMA 404 Hazard Mitigation Program for the "Northshore Critical Infrastructure Protection Project". The project will protect a severely vulnerable area located on the Reynolds Channel Waterfront and will include hardening the shoreline with a cantilever steel bulkhead, replacement of subsurface utilities that parallel the shoreline, and the installation of a storm water pump station. The City has received all permits for the project. Additionally, Long Beach is working on three NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program projects (Administered by the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery): 1 – \$12 million for replacement of bulkheads, 2 – \$4 million for drainage improvements to address chronic flooding areas, 3 – \$1.5 million for construction of Office of Emergency Management.

Rich Groh, Town of Babylon reported on the Town's stormwater mitigation project. Trout habitat improvement is being implemented on the Carlls River through the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery. The Town has also done outreach/education functions with high school students including, cleanups, water quality monitoring with A Day in the Life program, cleanup of floatables, cleanup at Ketchum's Creek, Earth Day, poster contests, and a scholarship program.

Adrienne Esposito, Citizens Campaign for the Environment reported that Suffolk County has recently voted to ban Styrofoam; the County's plastic bag ban goes into effect March 2020.

Alison Branco, The Nature Conservancy said that the Suffolk County Sandy Task Force recommendations will be released soon, suggested it would be good to have a presentation at the next Council meeting. She said USGS has two (2) gages at Moriches and Watch Hill, as she noted there was no more funding for this from Suffolk County.

David Berg, L.I. Regional Planning Council reported that bio-extraction is being done to remove nitrogen from surface waters. He said Nelle D'Aversa, LINAP Bio-extraction Coordinator, is working on: Development of a GIS-based bio-extraction siting tool; identifying potential sites where bio-extraction could be most effective in reducing surface water nitrogen concentrations; assisting regulatory agencies to establish commercial seaweed permitting programs; preparing shellfish (and ultimately seaweed) permitting guidance documents; and, identifying potential markets for bio-extracted products.

Kyle Rabin, LINAP reported that Nelle D'Aversa may be a future Council meeting presenter. LINAP is doing a water quality data collection project in the Western Bays with the Town of Hempstead and Hofstra University. They are currently in the process of writing a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).

Maryann Webb, Town of Oyster Bay reported the Town's Tobay Beach dune planting was held in March and there was a good turnout of volunteers. As part of Governor Cuomo's Shellfish Restoration Initiative, the Town has installed new FLUPSYs at Tobay Beach on floating docks. FLUPSYs have also been installed at Tappan Beach. Lou Siegel asked if any progress has been made on converting the vacant Alhambra Road Town property into a passive park. M. Webb did not know but said she would inquire about that project.

Jim Browne, Town of Hempstead reported the Town is working with Hofstra University on a salt marsh restoration project. They are also renovating their water quality lab and writing a QAPP for that process.

Nancy Solomon, Long Island Traditions reported on functions she has done, including, Waterfront Warriors, Boatbuilders, Maritime Film Festival, Bay House Tours, and writing two journal articles.

Tom Wilson, SUNY SoMAS reported the lab at SoMAS is doing restoration work at Flax Pond and shellfish restoration work. SoMAS has also completed its 5-year Strategic Plan "*A Vision for SoMAS Science, Education, and Outreach Leadership, 2019-2024*", which can be found on web here: <https://www.somas.stonybrook.edu/about/strategicplan/>

Adjournment

Kisha Santiago-Martinez thanked Mike Eagan for offering the use of his vessel for the 2019 Stewardship Award; she also expanded a bit on Marty Shea's comments concerning the aftermath of Sandy and hardened vs natural structures for resiliency. She thanked all for attending this Reserve Council meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.